

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

Of Mines and Men—the Story of Keetley

Few pursuits in life have had more influence on men than mining. Civilization itself prospered as men learned to take metal ores from the earth and fashion the substances into useful tools. Precious minerals and valuable ores have caused great cities and small towns to rise and fall with mining's fortunes and tides. Many men have given their lives as they struggled to take nature's treasures from deep within the earth. Mining, too, has usually written the character references of those who pursued it, as some have been motivated by a sincere desire to find things they could share and others have searched only for themselves and their greed.

Wasatch County has been vitally concerned with mines and miners, as has already been explained in earlier chapters. Vigorous mining progress in the Park City area had a great impact on commerce and industry in Wasatch towns, and much of the county's colorful history centers around the men of the mines.

The county's northern-most settlement, the town of Keetley, owes its existence to mining activity. It was the last community in the county to be organized, and for several decades was known and identified only as a mining shaft. Its location was first plotted in 1887 when leaders of the Park City Mining District chose a point of elevation for the portal of a drainage tunnel from the properties of the Daly Mining Company and the Ontario Silver Mining Company.

The Ontario-Daly No. 2 Drain Tunnel, as the project became known, was a tremendous undertaking for the time. It was to be more than 15,000 feet in length, cost nearly half a million dollars and take six years to complete. By 1898 the tunnel had been extended from the present site of Keetley into the Daly West Mining Company ground, a total of over 20,500 feet and had cost well over \$670,000.

The man chosen to supervise the work on the tunnel was one of the west's most picturesque mining characters, John B. "Jack" Keetley, as well known for his Pony Express riding as for his mining prowess. He reportedly purchased the famous Last Chance property at Bingham from the original locator for a horse and saddle, and paid for building a cabin on the claim with a six shooter. After working the property for a year, Mr. Keetley sold it for \$17,000. The claim has since yielded millions of dollars worth of ore.

A generous man, Mr. Keetley was particularly fond of youngsters. Many residents of Wasatch County today who were youngsters during

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